United Nations E/2003/55

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
25 April 2003

Original: English

Substantive session of 2003
Geneva, 30 June-25 July 2003
Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Coordination, programme and other questions: reports of coordination bodies

Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2002

Summary

The present report provides an overview of major developments in inter-agency cooperation during the year 2002 within the purview of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

During the year, Executive Heads in CEB focused on guiding the system's contribution to the development of strategies to review progress, and to advocate and assist Member States in the implementation of the development goals embodied in the United Nations Millennium Declaration; gave special attention to the follow-up to the objectives and goals of the Millennium Declaration relating to "the treatment and prevention of diseases, including HIV/AIDS and malaria", and "preventing armed conflict" — the two themes selected for greater in-depth treatment in the 2002 report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration; reviewed the progress being made in providing coherent, system-wide support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); and considered ways of fashioning an integrated follow-up of the three major conferences held during the course of the year: the International Conference on Financing for Development; the World Food Summit: Five Years Later; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

On the first theme, CEB provided a system-wide perspective for the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In formulating United Nations system responses, CEB re-emphasized the multisectoral challenge of achieving the health goals of the Millennium Declaration and took steps to promote mutually reinforcing actions in a

* E/2003/100.

03-33732 (E) 210503

number of areas. In relation to "preventing armed conflicts", Executive Heads decided that the central component of the United Nations system's strategy should lie in the promotion of development and the eradication of poverty; and adopted measures to ensure that the conflict prevention and development agendas would be mutually reinforcing. With regard to United Nations system support for Africa, CEB decided to use, to the maximum extent possible, NEPAD as the framework for maximizing the effectiveness and impact of its contribution to the sustainable development of Africa.

Supporting the work of CEB, and acting on its behalf, the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) in 2002 made progress in promoting converging action within the system in a number of key areas of common concern, including: information and communication technologies, and staff security and safety. In the programme area, the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), in addition to preparing CEB deliberations in the areas outlined above, particularly the follow-up to the Millennium Summit and system-wide support for NEPAD, pursued, during the year, inter-agency collaboration in areas ranging from information technology for development, with the World Summit on the Information Society in view, to trade facilitation.

The report also provides information on assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations as requested by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC).

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Introduction

1. Previous overview reports of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) highlighted the major impact that the global conferences of the 1990s had had on inter-agency relations, by providing the system with broad policy objectives around which it could rally and in relation to which common impact could be measured.

2. Building on the outcomes of these conferences, the United Nations Millennium Declaration[1] has marked another major turning point in the evolution of inter-agency coordination, deeply affecting the direction and thrust of the work of CEB. It has given the organizations of the system a single, overarching policy framework to which they are all, individually and collectively, committed. This has imparted unprecedented clarity of vision and unity of purpose to inter-agency work and has provided added impetus and focus to the effort, led by CEB, to maximize synergies in the work of United Nations organizations in advancing common, agreed development goals. The International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, have further enriched the shared policy framework guiding the system.

3. In keeping with these trends, the programmes of work of the Chief Executives Board's High-level Committees on Programmes and Management (HLCP and HLCM) are being increasingly focused on broad key themes of system-wide concern, making it possible for the Chief Executive Board's own agenda to concentrate on the common strategies to be followed by the system in order to maximize its contribution to progress in meeting the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and other global conferences. In drawing up these agendas, a deliberate effort is being made to maximize the support that the inter-agency system provides to intergovernmental follow-up processes, and particularly to support and facilitate the work of Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in promoting an effective, coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the conferences.

4. It bears noting again in this context that the CEB annual report is only one in a wide range of monitoring and reporting instruments that bring the collective capacities of the system to bear on intergovernmental deliberations. Complementing the new methods of work adopted for CEB and its two High-level Committees, is a flexible system of "networks" of specialists and ad hoc inter-agency groups which interact on a continuing basis and meet for specific tasks, whenever needed. It has evolved to replace former CEB subsidiary bodies dealing with individual programme areas of inter-agency concern. Not only are these new arrangements more cost-efficient, and more easily adaptable to changing requirements, including support requirements of the relevant intergovernmental bodies, but they also respond better to the renewed emphasis on implementation guiding the work of the inter-agency as well as the intergovernmental machinery. The culture that now pervades the work of CEB is thus one that combines a unified vision of agreed goals to which the system as a whole is committed, with a renewed focus on implementation and impact in pursuing these goals.

5. The present overview report provides highlights of the work of CEB and its two committees, HLCP and HLCM, during 2002. Continuing the approach followed

in previous overview reports, it endeavours to go beyond a factual account of developments within CEB and its subsidiary bodies, to provide a broader sense of the progress being achieved by the secretariats of the United Nations system in making the system as a whole an institutional and programmatic reality, and putting it at the collective service of Member States.

6. During the year, Executive Heads in CEB focused on guiding the system's contribution to the development of strategies to review progress, and to advocate and assist countries in the implementation of the development goals embodied in the United Nations Millennium Declaration; gave special attention to the follow-up to the objectives and goals of the Millennium Declaration relating to "the treatment and prevention of diseases, including HIV/AIDS and malaria", and "preventing armed conflict" — the two themes selected for greater in-depth treatment in the 2002 report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/57/270 and Corr.1); reviewed the progress being made in providing coherent, system-wide support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/57/304, annex); and considered ways of fashioning an integrated follow-up of the three major conferences held during the course of the year: the International Conference on Financing for Development; the World Food Summit: Five Years Later; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

7. Supporting the work of CEB, and acting on its behalf, the High-level Committee on Management has made progress in promoting converging action within the system in a number of key areas of common concern, including: information and communication technologies (ICT), and staff security and safety. In the programme area, the High-level Committee on Programmes, in addition to preparing CEB deliberations in the areas outlined above, particularly the follow-up to the Millennium Summit and system-wide support for NEPAD, pursued, during the year, inter-agency collaboration in priority areas, ranging from information technology for development, with the World Summit on the Information Society in view, to trade facilitation.

I. Follow-up to the Millennium Summit

A. Advancing the development goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration

8. Throughout the year, CEB, and associated inter-agency consultations, gave special attention to harnessing the contribution of the system to advancing the integrating framework of development goals offered by the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and to supporting their sustained implementation. CEB recognized the special responsibility of the United Nations system for mobilizing and sustaining national and international support for agreed development goals, and the major operational and management challenges that this responsibility implies. Among them is the challenge of effectively integrating these goals into the work of the system, including, in particular, the coordination mechanisms at the country level, and organizing system-wide support for tasks transcending national borders that require multi-country cooperation. One of the key contributions of the Millennium Declaration has been to translate some of the main goals of the

conferences of the 1990s into time-bound quantitative goals and it is now necessary to ensure that their distillation into country-owned strategies should be based on national priorities and take into account particular country-specific situations. The needs and situations of individual countries differ. Inter-agency coordination should be responsive to such differences and help maximize the impact on human lives.

9. Against the background of these considerations, both sessions of CEB during the year were utilized by the Secretary-General and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to consult with Executive Heads in shaping and refining guiding principles and strategic elements of a multi-pronged campaign centring around the development goals embodied in the United nations Millennium Declaration. CEB members concurred that key among the principles guiding the exercise should be the pivotal role of national ownership and participation; a focus on partnerships involving Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector; and the full mobilization of the United Nations system to contribute towards meaningful results, while recognizing that achieving the goals of the Millennium Declaration is ultimately the responsibility of Member States.

10. The strategic orientations of the effort include:

1. Approaches to monitoring that would help secure consistent interpretations of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (see A/56/326, annex) and contribute to turning goals and targets into recognized measures of successful international cooperation in support of sustainable development.

2. Analytical work on the policy dimensions that would help shift the policy dialogue among partners from the aspirational to the practical, that is to say, on the concrete measures required to make headway towards the agreed goals.

3. A mobilization effort aimed at fostering a self-sustaining movement extending beyond the United Nations system that would serve to mobilize commitments and capabilities of broad segments of society and build awareness and galvanize public opinion in support of actions, policies, priorities and corresponding resource allocations.

4. Operational activities to address key constraints on progress, guided by the mandates, comparative advantage and resources of the United Nations system at the country level.

11. In supporting these approaches and extending their full cooperation, members of CEB stressed the importance of building synergies among development goals and among the institutions mandated to pursue them. This should be achieved by building on, without blurring, the division of labour within the system and utilizing and harmonizing existing capacities and arrangements. It was observed that the emphasis on the development goals embodied in the United Nations Millennium Declaration not only did not diminish other mandated work of United Nations organizations, but should serve to give that work further impetus and direction. Similarly, the wide range of commitments and policy directives that have resulted from conference processes would need to continue to be followed up at all levels, in accordance with their own merit, and, indeed, as a means to give further content and thrust to the effort to realize the objectives of the Millennium Declaration.

B. Financing for development

12. Since the launch of the financing for development process by the General Assembly, CEB has been fully engaged in promoting an effective mobilization of relevant capacities available within the United Nations system in support of both the intergovernmental process and the coordinating secretariat. This has included policy advice and assistance in mobilizing the different constituencies of the organizations of the system in support of the International Conference on Financing for Development. CEB will build on this experience in ensuring an effective and participatory response to the request addressed to the Secretary-General by the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development[2] "to provide — with collaboration from the secretariats of the major institutional stakeholders concerned, fully utilizing the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination mechanism — sustained follow-up within the United Nations system to the agreements and commitments reached at the present Conference and to ensure effective secretariat support" (para. 72).

13. CEB will revert to issues related to the follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus in 2003, bearing in mind that they will be at the centre of both the special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization in April, and the high-level dialogue of the General Assembly in October, and that financing for development was selected as one of the themes to be given special attention in the 2003 report of the Secretary-General to the Assembly on the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The CEB High-level Committee on Programmes is also taking action to reflect in its work programme relevant aspects of the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference.

14. Efforts to ensure enhanced system-wide cooperation, and in particular strong links, at both the secretariat and the intergovernmental level, between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, in the follow-up to Monterrey, are being accompanied by actions to pursue close collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, so as to help steer and sustain their active engagement and to ensure comprehensive reporting to the concerned intergovernmental bodies on follow-up activities and overall progress.

C. World Summit on Sustainable Development

15. CEB also had a first opportunity, at its second regular session of 2002, to address the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. CEB members shared the view that the Johannesburg Summit had succeeded in giving renewed political impetus to the implementation of commitments and agreements reached in Rio in 1992, and in introducing important new goals and targets to guide and orient follow-up at both the national and the international level. It was now incumbent on the system to build on, and sustain, this momentum.

16. It was pointed out that the key message to be conveyed by the system should be "implementation", which implies acting on the whole range of commitments made. In contributing to advancing the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, based on a clear division of responsibilities among organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, the system should

focus on promoting policies that effectively integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, as well as on supporting the achievement of specific goals and time-bound targets, with the poverty eradication goals embodied in the United Nations Millennium Declaration as an overarching concern.

17. In reviewing the implications of the World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes for the ongoing activities of the system in the five areas to which the Secretary-General had especially called the attention of the Summit — water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity — CEB members shared the view that strategic and programmatic frameworks to advance implementation of the Summit outcomes should be flexible and action-oriented, and should contribute to enhancing coherence and maximizing impact by all concerned institutions. The need was stressed, at the same time, for bold approaches that would give visibility to the implementation processes, particularly with respect to the areas of water and energy, which, unlike health, agriculture and biodiversity, did not have a single institutional focal point in the United Nations system. Enhancing system-wide coherence should be accompanied by a systematic effort to fully exploit opportunities presented by the Summit for sustaining and expanding partnerships with the private sector, local authorities and civil society. The same considerations applied to follow-up actions concerning changing patterns of productions and consumption. In recognizing the importance of this objective, the Summit had highlighted the need to work also at sectoral and enterprise levels and involve business and workers in these processes.

18. There was general support for the view that the main focus of inter-agency action should be at the country level, avoiding the creation of new coordination mechanisms while building on and reinforcing existing ones.

19. CEB members further noted that the Doha development round had encompassed an array of trade-related actions that could substantially reinforce the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and advance the overarching goal of eradicating poverty. These actions ranged from helping poor countries integrate into the world trading system and providing assistance to strengthen their productive capacity, thus enabling them to benefit from market opening measures, to promoting government reforms (for example, customs reforms). In the same context, the need for coordinated actions on the part of the system in trade-related development assistance and capacity-building was emphasized.

20. CEB requested HLCP to pursue the actions required to maximize the system's support to a sustained follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and will give further focus to the matter in 2003.

21. An important concern of CEB in addressing the follow-up to both the Monterrey and the Johannesburg conferences is not only to ensure that the system's capacities are mobilized in ensuring a coordinated and sustained implementation of their outcomes, but also to contribute, both analytically and practically, to meeting the directive of the General Assembly that the follow-up to conferences should be coherent and effectively integrated, and related to relevant goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This has been a consistent objective of the work of CEB and an important part of its dialogue with the Economic and Social Council and of the support that the system provides to the Council's deliberations. CEB

trusts that the work of the open-ended ad hoc working group established by the Assembly in its resolution 57/270 of 20 December 2002 to consider such issues will serve to advance these objectives and is committed to extending to the working group all the necessary support.

D. Treatment and prevention of diseases

22. In the United Nations Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government had resolved to have "halted, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity" by 2015 (para. 19). The report of the Secretary-General on a road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/56/326) identified (see para. 306 thereof) the treatment and prevention of diseases, including HIV/AIDS and malaria, as one of the themes — the other being preventing armed conflict — that would be given special attention in the 2002 annual report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration.

23. CEB discussions on the subject drew on the work of the Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, launched by the World Health Organization (WHO). Executive Heads expressed particular appreciation for the Commission's analysis of the financial and other requirements for achieving the Millennium Development Goals in health, and for the strong evidence it offered of the linkages of health to poverty reduction and long-term economic growth.

24. Underlying the preparations for the discussions of CEB and the Board's own deliberations was the recognition that progress in the health sector required a host of mutually reinforcing interventions in both the economic and social spheres and that almost every CEB member organization had a contribution to make to the realization of the health goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The challenge before the system is thus twofold: to consider what the organizations of the system can do — individually and collectively — to bring about the synergies required to make real and sustained progress in the health sector; and to reflect on the contribution that such progress could make to the policy outcomes that each organization is promoting in its area of competence, thus ensuring that advances in the health sector impact positively on the effort to achieve the other development goals embodied in the Millennium Declaration.

25. Discussions in CEB on the need for a multisectoral approach to meeting the challenge of the health-related goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration served to further highlight the interrelated nature of the development goals embodied in the Millennium Declaration and therefore the importance for the system of advocating and supporting a holistic approach to their implementation.

26. In relation specifically to the health goals, the requirements of economic growth and increases in personal incomes for sustaining progress in the health sector were stressed. The strong link between human health and the environment was also highlighted. This was illustrated by the effects of climate change, and of increasing exposure to harmful chemicals, on the incidence and prevalence of diseases. Indeed, there is hardly a sector of development policy — from agriculture, education and population to water and sanitation, nutrition, rural development, sustainable human settlements, empowerment of women, and investment in children — that does not

impinge on health. In the circumstances, the sequencing of policy interventions and their coordination become crucial.

27. CEB thus stressed the special importance of articulating and making explicit the interrelationship between health and other goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and, more generally, in the system's support strategies at the country level. It called on organizations to collaborate to help secure the place of health in poverty reduction strategies, and to assist countries in tracking progress towards the achievement of health-related goals of the Millenaium Declaration, and, given resource constraints, making appropriate choices among the complementary investments required to achieve these goals. It was also important that a rights-based approach to human health should enter into the policy dialogue and affect overall policy development. The system needed to focus its efforts on outcome strategies to overcome sectoral fragmentation and to bring about measurable results.

28. Turning specifically to HIV/AIDS and its impact, CEB members recalled its devastating consequences for different sectors of the economy and the structures of society, including the educational systems of many countries. The importance of preventive education in combating HIV/AIDS was emphasized. Reference was also made to the need to provide for the management of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the perspective of sustainable human settlements and poverty reduction efforts through slum upgrading, and the maintenance and improvement of human settlements standards to facilitate access to shelter of AIDS-affected persons and orphans. The need to extend programmes to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS to refugees and internally displaced persons was also highlighted.

29. In a like manner, promoting and supporting a culture of prevention should be given increasing attention in the system's activities to combat malaria, which continues to pose serious health problems in many parts of the world. CEB called on the organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen their support for research and other collaborative efforts to address this scourge.

30. It was recognized that the workplace is assuming growing importance in the treatment and prevention of diseases. As enterprises increasingly recognize the benefits of good health, the dissemination of information on the treatment and prevention of infectious diseases, utilizing existing infrastructures, particularly in rural areas, was viewed as a crucial requirement.

E. Preventing armed conflicts

31. Complementing inter-agency collaboration in the preparation of the 2002 report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration, CEB, at its second regular session of 2002, considered issues related to the prevention of armed conflicts and the response thereto of the organizations of the United Nations system.

32. CEB acknowledged the responsibility of the system to support national efforts to integrate a prevention perspective in development programmes and planning processes at the country level. Members of CEB fully recognized the importance, as stressed by the Secretary-General, of ensuring that the task of building capacity for structural and operational prevention at all levels was given high priority by the

international community. CEB recognized, at the same time, that, in order to be an effective source of advice and support to these ends, the United Nations system had to significantly deepen its understanding of the causes of tension within, and between, nations and of the links between peace and development.

33. Members of CEB expressed strong support for the Secretary-General's effort to advance an integrated approach to conflict prevention, and indicated the readiness of their organizations to contribute to strengthened inter-agency consultations so that relevant experiences and capacities represented in the system could be effectively drawn upon in deepening and furthering this approach. They also fully concurred with the view, highlighted in the preparatory process to the CEB discussion, that the focus of system-wide support must remain at the country and subregional levels to assure country and regional ownership of strategies for the prevention of armed conflict.

34. The exchange in CEB focused on the conditions most often associated with armed conflict and the system's response to them in helping prevent or manage conflict.

35. It was generally felt that, though several factors contribute to situations of armed conflict, the prevalence of poverty was of primary importance, as it tended to exacerbate social, economic and cultural tensions. Progress towards the development goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, particularly poverty eradication is therefore, vital to reducing the risk of armed conflict. Similarly, non-availability of decent work creates a sense of despair and contributes to increased social tensions, criminality and violence. In turn, education and training and job creation are key means to advance social harmony and peace. The central component of a system-wide strategy for conflict prevention should therefore be the promotion of sustainable development. The conflict prevention and development agendas should be mutually reinforcing. Moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention would avert the waste of resources caused by conflicts, and make those resources available for development.

36. Environmental degradation and resource depletion also often constitute major risk factors. The system's work towards disaster prevention and mitigation, proper water management, and the protection and conservation of the environment and natural resources should be viewed also as a contribution to, and an integral element of, strategies for conflict prevention.

37. Similarly, refugee situations can become a breeding ground for terrorism and create the opportunities for recruiting child soldiers, thus fuelling armed conflict. Durable solutions to the problem of refugees — involving successful repatriation and local integration, enhanced legal protection and the institution of programmes with refugees as potential active agents of development — should become an integral component of system-wide approaches to conflict prevention.

38. Conflicts are often deep-rooted and tend to recur. As such, they display warning signs which should be captured and acted upon. Society is also undermined by organized crime and corruption, which tend to perpetuate crises and can transform local issues into international conflicts.

39. It was observed that external economic and financial support in conflict situations should be accompanied by serious efforts towards transparency and accountability. The United Nations system should be proactive in bringing to light

all relevant factors and in identifying the way to durable solutions that effectively engage the responsibility of all concerned parties.

40. CEB concluded that the creation of a sound analytical base in respect of the conditions that lead to armed conflict — and thus in respect of the most effective ways by which the collective strengths of the system and the diverse, but rich, experience of United Nations organizations in conflict resolution and dialogue can be brought to bear on conflict prevention — should receive focused attention by the system in the period ahead. At the global level, the key priorities of the system are embodied in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. At the country level, progress is being made through the common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) and PRSP processes. A clear framework of priorities, goals and instruments thus exists within which the analysis of interrelationships among factors leading to conflict prevention can be pursued and prevention strategies set. The system's role in supporting the development of effective regional and subregional conflict prevention strategies also requires further collective attention, as does the effort to mainstream the status and role of women in conflict prevention strategies at all levels.

41. The Chief Executives Board decided to actively pursue these issues in close consultation with all partners.

II. System-wide support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

42. In 2001, CEB reiterated that support for Africa's development should remain a major focus for the United Nations system and requested the High-level Committee on Programmes to maintain the issue in its agenda and keep system-wide support for NEPAD under review. CEB had also decided to strengthen inter-agency coordination arrangements at the regional level, and asked the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to continue to act as the United Nations system's key interlocutor with African countries on NEPAD.

43. There was a strong consensus that the United Nations system should pursue a deliberate strategy to extend and engender support for NEPAD. This should include a focused effort at integrating the implementation of NEPAD in the follow-up processes of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and in the agenda and outcomes of conferences and summits. Full use should be made of existing country-level mechanisms and ongoing processes of review, and improvement of national coordination frameworks, particularly the PRSPs, should be supported. National leadership and capacity-building should be reinforced and the performance of the United Nations system at the country level should be systematically and closely monitored within the framework of NEPAD.

44. In reviewing developments with regard to United Nations system support for NEPAD, the High-level Committee on Programme (HLCP), at its third regular session held in March 2002, recalled that NEPAD was not a new institutional mechanism or organization but a policy and programme framework designed by African leaders to further Africa's development (CEB/2002/4, para. 8). It noted that the NEPAD Steering Committee and secretariat had been actively seeking the support of different United Nations agencies in relation to various tasks, taking into

account their particular strengths, as needed. HLCP stressed the importance, building on these contacts and the coordinating framework provided by the system of regional inter-agency consultations convened by the Executive Secretary of ECA, of extending system-wide support to NEPAD and of systematically sharing information and experience that would serve to enhance the quality and coherence of such support. Organizations were invited to utilize to these ends the facilities of ECA, which would help steer the work of United Nations organizations in the continent and report periodically to HLCP and CEB.

45. At the first regular session of 2002 of CEB, held in April 2002, Executive Heads noted the important developments that had taken place in recent months, including the agreement reached at the first meeting of the Heads of State Implementation Committee held in October 2001 on a governing structure for NEPAD, consisting of an Implementation Committee of Heads of State, a Steering Committee and a secretariat (see CEB/2002/1, para. 24). At the same time, the main areas for which specific projects and programmes were to be developed had been identified. At the inter-agency level, a regional consultation of United Nations agencies working in Africa had identified six thematic areas for priority collaboration within the system: infrastructure; human resource development; macroeconomic policies and trade diversification; information technology; agriculture and environment; and population and employment. Human rights, humanitarian and refugee concerns were subsequently added. These developments confirmed the CEB conclusion that NEPAD offers a solid framework for the maximization by the United Nations system of the effectiveness and impact of its contribution to Africa's development. As the actual programmes under NEPAD took shape, inter-agency actions would gather momentum.

46. In this light, Executive Heads reiterated their strong support for the integrated approach to peace-building and development reflected in NEPAD, and the efforts under way to foster peace, manage internal and inter-State conflicts and the associated problems of refugees and internally displaced persons, and strengthen national institutions. These were essential to creating a conducive environment for sustainable development and encouraging investments in Africa. However, these efforts needed to be supported in their own right. Problems arising in one country should not be allowed to affect the international community's approach to the entire continent. In particular, international development support needed to be substantially strengthened. A doubling of official development assistance (ODA), and its maintenance at that level for a decade, were a basic requirement for achieving the goal of halving poverty by the year 2015. This had to be accompanied by substantial investment and sustained technical support from the international community.

47. Among the areas requiring essential support from the United Nations system was that of building the capabilities that would enable African countries to benefit from new trade opportunities. Diversification of African economies, fostering of the productive sector and progress in trade facilitation were of vital importance in this regard. A strong focus on reversing and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS was also considered crucial. Other areas cited as requiring closer attention included the role of science and technology in development, and the adverse consequences of rapid urbanization, and the growth of urban slums.

48. CEB urged organizations to maintain and further enhance their engagement in Africa, and to continue consultation and coordination with ECA, as the system's key

interlocutor on NEPAD. HLCP was requested to maintain NEPAD in its agenda and assist CEB in keeping the system's support for NEPAD under review.

III. Developments in inter-agency collaboration

A. Collaboration in management areas

49. Progress continued to be made in 2002, under the aegis of both HLCM and HLCP, to introduce innovative and more effective modalities of inter-agency cooperation. The present section provides illustrations of developments and initiatives in the management as well as the programme areas that are contributing to greater system-wide effectiveness and coherence.

1. Information and communication technologies

50. The development of a common vision for information and communication technologies (ICT) has remained a priority item in the work programme of the High-level Committee on Management. At its third session held in March 2002, the Committee discussed a long-term strategy encompassing how the organizations of the system could most effectively employ new ICT to advance their agendas and how, in so doing, they could best share experiences and results. It requested that work in this area be pursued around the following specific initiatives (CEB/2002/3, para. 9):

- Developing a compendium of good practices in the use of ICT for programme delivery, as well as of good practices relating to key hardware, software and networking issues and methods for identifying and justifying the risks, rewards and costs of ICT infrastructure development and business innovations.
- Disseminating best practices leading to more secure and robust information services system-wide.
- Exploring the feasibility of a system-wide search engine.
- Improving information-sharing among staff of United Nations system organizations, inter alia, by expanding joint purchasing through framework agreements and volume discounts for ICT hardware, software and services; and facilitating thematic discussions among ICT experts for knowledge-sharing on specific topics of inter-agency concern, such as Enterprise Resource Planning systems.

51. Progress has also been made in establishing a United Nations system Extranet, allowing a better sharing of content, tools and applications that ordinarily reside in the Intranets of individual United Nations system organizations. The Committee urged organizations that had not yet done so to complete the technical work necessary to enable them to access the Extranet. It also requested the CEB secretariat to examine the suggestions made by the Committee as to the applications and types of information — both strategic policy information and administrative information that would be useful to the staff at large — that would most benefit from dissemination through the Extranet.

52. To examine the feasibility and cost/benefit of developing an inter-agency search facility across the public web sites of all the United Nations system

organizations, based on customized commercial software, the United Nations Secretariat had carried out a review of various search products. It concluded that the "Google" service fulfilled the requirements for a system-wide search facility. HLCM endorsed the concept of developing the search engine. It invited organizations to participate in a pilot project on the basis of which a more detailed proposal, with cost estimates and a time frame for implementation, could be presented at a future session.

53. With regard to the compendium of good ICT practices, HLCM noted that work had begun, inter alia, on the development of a number of guides for senior management on key hardware/software and networking issues. The first of these relates to Information Technology Infrastructure Library Service Management. Work is also under way on methods for identifying and justifying risks, rewards and costs of ICT infrastructure development and business innovations.

54. On information security, HLCM requested information on the work being undertaken by United Nations system organizations resulting in more secure and robust information services to cope with the increasing risks of cyber-attacks and the like. It endorsed the recommendation of a working group that had prepared a template for improved management of information security.

55. HLCM also expressed interest in closer links with the ICT Task Force and requested the CEB secretariat to identify areas in which greater synergies or effectiveness might be attained by collaborating with the Task Force.

2. Staff security and safety

56. HLCM reviewed progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, and protection of United Nations personnel. It noted that, at Headquarters, the recruitment of additional staff to serve in the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) had been almost completed. Similarly, in the field, a majority of Field Security Officers (FSOs) were already in place. Applicants successful in the interview, but not assigned to a field position, would be placed on the UNSECOORD security roster so as to be available for rapid assignment. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which would undertake the recruitment and administration of the FSOs on behalf of the United Nations system.

57. Significant progress was also reported in training to enhance the security awareness and preparedness of staff. In addition to the training programmes themselves, an interactive CD-ROM had been developed for use by all United Nations organizations. The essential message is that security is a shared responsibility, and that senior managers, at headquarters as well as in the field, have to take full responsibility for their role in the management of staff security.

58. The issue of air safety, not only in situations where the United Nations system charters aircraft, but also in relation to the use of commercial aircraft, is becoming a matter of growing concern. An inter-agency group has been tasked to consider proposals to establish common minimum air safety and security standards. Recommendations will be forwarded to HLCM at its next meeting. The Committee also took note of the willingness of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to provide assistance.

59. HLCM further requested the World Food Programme (WFP) to consider taking on the responsibility of administering all humanitarian and other air operations, excluding peacekeeping, and to establish an independent air safety unit to ensure both the efficiency and the safety of United Nations humanitarian and other air operations. The offer of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to join WFP and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat in the Air Safety Working Group was welcomed.

60. HLCM confirmed its commitment to the implementation of minimum operating security standards at all duty stations and commended those organizations that were taking an active role in facilitating the implementation of those standards. It requested UNSECOORD to provide an update on the status of implementation of the minimum operating security standards at the next session.

B. Collaboration on conferences

1. World Food Summit: Five Years Later

61. The World Food Summit: Five Years Later, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provides yet another example of close inter-agency cooperation, inter alia, in the perspective of advancing progress in furthering the objectives and goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Summit had called for a 10-year review, but it was subsequently decided to convene a review conference after 5 years to draw attention to the lack of progress in achieving the hunger reduction goals set by the Summit.

62. FAO worked closely with United Nations organizations in both the preparatory phase and during the conference itself. Before the conference, FAO worked with organizations of the system in preparing the background documents. Papers prepared by FAO staff[3] were circulated to peer reviewers, including relevant United Nations system organizations. In particular, a paper on "Mobilizing resources for agriculture in support of food security" had benefited from the work of a high-level panel on resource mobilization convened by the Director-General of FAO in June 2001, which brought together senior representatives of all major international financial institutions, UNDP and WFP under the chairmanship of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

63. The Secretary-General and 26 United Nations system organizations took an active part in the Summit and participated in the multi-stakeholder dialogue as well as in parallel and side events held during the Summit.

64. FAO is working closely with relevant United Nations partners in ensuring that the follow-up to the World Food Summit: Five Years Later and the follow-up processes for other United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit, are mutually reinforcing.

2. World Summit on the Information Society

65. The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) requested the Secretary-General of ITU to place the question of the holding of a World Summit on the Information Society in the agenda of CEB (see A/57/71-E/2002/52). Most member organizations of CEB have expressed interest in being associated with the preparatory process as well as with the Summit.

66. The Summit will be held under the patronage of the Secretary-General of the United Nations with ITU taking the lead role in the preparations. It will be held in two phases — the first in Geneva in December 2003, and the second in Tunis in 2005. It will provide an opportunity for all key stakeholders to collectively develop a better understanding of the information revolution and its impact on the international community. The issue of the roles of the various partners (Member States, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society) in ensuring an effective, coordinated growth of the information society around the globe will be at the heart of the Summit. It is expected that a clear statement of political will and a concrete plan of action to achieve the goals of the information society will emerge from the Summit, and will fully reflect the different interests at stake. This will require partnerships with public and private entities, which are being actively sought.

67. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/183 of 21 December 2001, an open-ended Preparatory Committee has been convened to define the agenda, decide on the modalities of the participation of other stakeholders in the Summit and finalize the draft declaration and plan of action. A High-level Summit Organizing Committee to coordinate the efforts of the United Nations family has also been formed. It reports directly to CEB and includes the International Labour Organization (ILO), FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), ICAO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), ITU, the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UNDP, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNHCR.

68. The First Preparatory Committee meeting was held in Geneva in July 2002. The inputs of non-governmental organizations, civil society and the business sector are also being actively sought. Two further meetings of the Preparatory Committee are planned for 2003, as are four regional conferences for Africa, Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

69. The Secretary-General of ITU briefed CEB in November 2002 on preparations for the Summit and noted that the focus of the Summit would be on tackling the digital divide by providing access to ICT for all; raising awareness of ICT as a tool for economic development and assisting in implementing the Millennium Development Goals; and building security and confidence in the use of ICT, including the possible need for new frameworks in cyberspace.

70. The ICT Task Force had offered its global networks of working groups as well as regional networks as platforms through which to maximize engagement of all stakeholders in the preparatory process.

C. Innovative modalities of programme collaboration: trade facilitation

71. The High-level Committee on Programmes (HCLP) has provided the forum for the launch of an inter-agency initiative on trade facilitation. At an inter-agency meeting convened by UNCTAD in April 2002, the establishment of a mechanism for

sharing knowledge and experiences among participating agencies was agreed upon. The mechanism involves the use of the latest information technology to promote transparency, coordination and cooperative work, supported by an automatic and interactive web site. After an initial trial period, the proposed web site will be in widespread use among agencies seeking to disseminate information on their work in the field of trade facilitation, as well as to exchange ideas and studies in support of inter-agency collaborative initiatives.

72. The main United Nations organizations dealing with trade facilitation were asked to nominate a "Manager", who would be responsible for the specific inputs of the agency, and to assign "Authors", who would provide the inputs.

73. HLCP welcomed the flexible approach adopted by the initiative as a model for future inter-agency collaboration on specific projects.

IV. Assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations

74. Information on the measures taken by the United Nations system to provide assistance to third States affected by the implementation of sanctions imposed on Iraq and the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was first contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the question of special economic problems of States as a result of sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations (A/48/573-S/26705) and thereafter in the annual overview reports of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) (E/1993/81, E/1994/19, E/1995/21, E/1996/18 and Add.1, E/1997/54 and Corr.1, E/1998/21, E/1999/48, E/2000/53 and E/2001/55) and of CEB (E/2002/55). In addition, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly five reports (A/49/356, A/50/423, A/51/356, A/52/535 and A/54/534) on economic assistance to States affected by the implementation of sanctions imposed on the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Since 2000, the report on that subject has been superseded by the report of the Secretary-General on economic assistance to the Eastern European States affected by the developments in the Balkans (A/55/620 and Corr.1 and A/56/632). Moreover, the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions has been the subject of a series of eight annual reports of the Secretary-General (A/50/361, A/51/317, A/52/308, A/53/312, A/54/383 and Add.1, A/55/295 and Add.1, A/56/303 and A/57/165 and Add.1).

75. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/25 of 19 November 2002 on the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions, took note of the most recent report of the Secretary-General (A/57/165 and Add.1) and requested him to pursue the implementation of Assembly resolutions 50/51, 51/208, 52/162, 53/107, 54/107, 55/157 and 56/87 and to ensure that the competent units within the Secretariat developed the adequate capacity and appropriate modalities, technical procedures and guidelines to continue, on a regular basis, to collate and coordinate information about international assistance available to third States affected by the implementation of sanctions, to continue developing a possible methodology for assessing the adverse consequences actually incurred by third States and to explore innovative and practical measures of assistance to the affected third States.

76. In the same resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed the important role of the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and CPC in mobilizing and monitoring the economic assistance efforts of the international community and the United Nations system on behalf of States confronted with special economic problems arising from the carrying out of preventive or enforcement measures imposed by the Security Council and in identifying solutions to the special economic problems of those States; and took note of the decision of the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2000/32 of 28 July 2000, to continue its consideration of the question of assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions, and decided to transmit the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the matter to the Council at its substantive session of 2003. In the same resolution, the Assembly invited the organizations of the United Nations system, international financial institutions, other international and regional organizations and Member States to address more specifically and directly, where appropriate, the special economic problems of third States affected by sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter and, for that purpose, to consider improving procedures for consultations to maintain a constructive dialogue with such States, including through regular and frequent meetings as well as, where appropriate, special meetings between the affected third States and the donor community, with the participation of United Nations agencies and other international organizations.

77. The relevant components of the United Nations system and related organizations, including the international financial institutions, are fully aware of the special needs and situations of the affected States. Most of them have been providing, on a regular basis, information on their assistance programmes on behalf of countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations, as reflected in the aforementioned reports of the Secretary-General. Their governing bodies remain committed to responding positively to requests for assistance to States confronted with special economic problems as a result of implementing preventive or enforcement measures imposed by the Security Council.

Notes

[1] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[2] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[3] These papers, entitled "New challenges to the achievement of World Food Summit goals", "Fostering the political will to fight hunger", and "Mobilizing resources for agriculture in support of food security", were subsequently collected in a volume entitled *Mobilizing the Political Will and Resources to Banish World Hunger* (Rome, FAO, 2002).